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Doctorado en Lenguas Modernas

**How to Handle Latin Expressions When Translating Court  
Documents in Argentina**

(English <> Spanish)

USAL  
DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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### Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to all my family (my caring parents, Juan Carlos and María Pilar, my husband and my beautiful children Marina, Lucila and Santiago) and to all my friends for all the enthusiasm they triggered in me to pursue this personal goal and who supported me all along the way. A further dedication to my kindred spirit, Andrea, for being always there and supporting me restlessly, filling my life with true understanding despite any difference. Thank you all for giving so much light to my life.



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## ABSTRACT

*Although the Plain Legal English movement exists both in the United States of America (US) and in the United Kingdom (UK), it can be observed that some Latin expressions are still being used by lawyers, judges, and officers of the Judiciary of both the Anglo-American system and the civil-law legal tradition of Argentina. Sometimes there is a match between the uses of Latin expressions in both languages, sometimes there is a coincidence between a Latin expression and a cultural equivalence, but there are instances where the frequency and inference differs in the use of Latin and, here, a cultural equivalence lacks.*

*When an Argentine translator has to handle Latin expressions in a certified translation into English or Spanish, many doubts arise: Should these expressions be translated? Should they be kept in Latin? What are the parameters s/he should bear in mind when handling these expressions?*

*The answers to these questions are crucial for translators of legal texts because there has always been a belief that they should always remain in Latin, since they are universally understood. However, this is not always so.*

*In order to assess which of those expressions are sensed as usual and meaningful in both languages, thorough research was conducted among a group of Argentine lawyers (some of them with international practice) and Argentine translators through a self-administered questionnaire. Some specific interviews were made to an Argentine judge, an eminent Argentine lawyer (with international prestige), an internationally prestigious translator and lawyer, and a lawyer from another civil-law country (to address the universal concept of the particular use of these expressions).*

*Since making an extensive research involving material of all branches of law from Argentina, the US and the UK would have taken volumes, this research was conducted only for Argentina and the US Law of Procedure. To such end, samples of court cases, books of scholars and reliable Internet pages of both countries were analyzed as a basis of*



*comparison in the use of Latin expressions. A historical overview of Latin in England is also included, which represents the background for the later use of these expressions in the US.*

*The analysis of the data collected has shown that specifically in this branch of law there are still plenty of Latin expressions used for certain specific ends inherent to the legal jargon alone. As evidenced by the material analyzed, not all of them are used in both countries with the same emphasis and meaning, some of them are used only in one of the countries and some others are used evenly in both territories, and translators are not always aware of this fact and tend to leave those expressions unattended.*

*Therefore, a suggestion will be made on how to handle said expressions when doing certified translations in Argentina (English <=> Spanish) so as to achieve the desired equivalence and to be consistent with the legislation and rules in force.*

*Given the scope of this work as described above, there are many aspects of this linguistic approach that remain to be explored. The fact that there are many Latin expressions compared and analyzed is not restrictive, since there are plenty of others which have been left aside. For this research, more than 70 expressions which are commonly found in the drafting of court material and related books of scholars have been chosen.*

*Finally the need for an inclusion of this topic in university curricula will be addressed.*



## **ABSTRACT**

*A pesar de que existe el movimiento hacia el uso claro del lenguaje jurídico (Plain Legal English) tanto en EE. UU. como en el Reino Unido, puede observarse que los abogados, jueces y funcionarios judiciales tanto del sistema angloamericano como del sistema de base romanística de la Argentina todavía usan algunas expresiones en Latín. En algunas ocasiones, el uso de las expresiones en Latín es igual en ambas lenguas, en otras existe una coincidencia entre la expresión en Latín y un equivalente cultural, pero existen casos en los que la frecuencia e inferencia difiere en cuanto al uso del Latín y donde no existe equivalencia cultural.*

*Cuando un traductor argentino tiene que ver qué hacer con las expresiones en latín en una traducción pública al inglés o al español, surgen muchas dudas: ¿Deberían traducirse? ¿Deberían dejarse en latín? ¿Qué parámetros deben tenerse en cuenta para tratar estas expresiones?*

*Las respuestas a estas preguntas son esenciales para el traductor de textos legales, ya que siempre ha existido la creencia de que deberían permanecer en latín, debido a que son universalmente conocidas. Sin embargo, no siempre es así.*

*A fin de determinar cuáles de estas expresiones se consideran habituales y con sentido en ambas lenguas, se hizo una investigación detallada entre un grupo de abogados argentinos (algunos de ellos con experiencia internacional) y de traductores argentinos mediante una encuesta auto-administrada. Se hicieron entrevistas específicas a una jueza argentina, a un abogado prestigioso (con renombre internacional), a un traductor y abogado con prestigio mundial, y a un abogado de otro país con sistema de derecho romanístico (a fin de conocer el concepto universal del uso particular de estas expresiones).*

*Ya que realizar un estudio minucioso de todas las ramas del derecho en la Argentina, los EE. UU. y el Reino Unido hubiera sido muy voluminoso, este estudio se realizó únicamente respecto del Derecho Procesal de la Argentina y de los Estados Unidos de América. A estos fines, se analizaron casos judiciales, doctrina y se páginas confiables de Internet de*



*ambos países, lo que sirvió de base comparativa del uso de las expresiones en Latín. Se hizo una reseña del uso del latín en Inglaterra, ya que es el antecedente del uso posterior de estas expresiones en los EE. UU.*

*El análisis de los datos recabados demuestra que, específicamente en esta rama del derecho, todavía se utilizan muchas expresiones en latín para ciertos fines específicos propios de la jerga jurídica. Según surge del material analizado, no todas se utilizan en ambos países con el mismo énfasis o significado, algunas se utilizan únicamente en uno de ellos y otras se usan de igual manera en ambos. Asimismo, surge que los traductores no siempre están al tanto de este hecho y tienden a desatender estas expresiones.*

*Por ello, se sugerirá cómo tratar dichas expresiones al hacer traducciones públicas en la Argentina (al español y al inglés) a fin de lograr la equivalencia deseada y para ser consecuente con la legislación y las normas vigentes.*

*Debido al alcance de este trabajo que se indica antes, existen varios aspectos de este enfoque lingüístico que tienen que seguir explorándose. El hecho de que se hayan comparado y analizado muchas expresiones en Latín no es restrictivo, ya que existen muchas otras que se han dejado a un lado. Para esta investigación, se han elegido más de 70 expresiones que habitualmente se encuentran en la redacción de material judicial y doctrina relacionada.*

*Para finalizar, se dejará planteada la necesidad de incorporar este tema en los programas de estudio universitarios.*



## RÉSUMÉ

Même s'il existe une tendance vers l'utilisation d'un langage juridique compréhensible (*Plain Legal English*) tant aux EE. UU. qu'au Royaume Uni on peut remarquer que les avocats, les juges et les fonctionnaires judiciaires du système anglo-américain et aussi du système juridique de l'Argentine, d'inspiration romaniste, utilisent toujours quelques expressions en Latin. Dans certains cas, l'utilisation des expressions en Latin est la même dans les deux langues, en d'autres, il y a une coïncidence entre l'expression en Latin et un équivalent culturel, mais il y a des cas où la fréquence et l'inférence diffèrent quant à l'utilisation du Latin et quand il n'y a pas d'équivalence culturelle.

Quand un traducteur argentin doit décider que faut-il faire avec les expressions en latin dans une traduction assermentée en langue anglaise ou espagnole, les doutes sont nombreux : Faut-il les traduire ? Faut-il les laisser en latin ? Quels sont les paramètres à en tenir compte pour traiter ces expressions ?

Les réponses à ces questions sont essentielles pour le traducteur spécialisé en textes juridiques, car les vieilles croyances nous conduisent à les laisser en latin, étant donné qu'elles sont connues universellement. Nonobstant, il n'est pas toujours ainsi.

Afin de déterminer quelles sont les expressions réputées être habituelles et qui ont le même sens dans les deux langues, une recherche détaillée a été réalisée entre un groupe d'avocats argentins (certains d'entre eux ayant une ample expérience au niveau international) et des traducteurs argentins, au moyen d'une enquête auto-administrée. Des entretiens spécifiques ont été effectués à une juge argentine, à un avocat prestigieux (de renommée internationale), à un traducteur et avocat de prestige mondial et à un avocat d'un autre pays ayant un système de droit romaniste (dans le but de connaître le concept universel sur l'utilisation de ces expressions).

Étant donné qu'une étude minutieuse de toutes les branches du droit en Argentine, les États-Unis d'Amérique et le Royaume Uni aurait été très volumineuse, la présente étude s'est réalisée uniquement par rapport au Droit de procédure en Argentine et aux États-Unis d'Amérique. À cet effet, des cas judiciaires, la doctrine et des pages fiables d'internet des



deux pays ont été analysés et ont servi de base comparative pour l'utilisation des expressions en Latin.

L'analyse des données recueillies montre que, notamment dans cette branche du droit, plusieurs expressions en latin sont toujours utilisées pour des fins spécifiques propres au jargon juridique. Du matériel utilisé, il appert que ces expressions ne sont pas toutes utilisées dans les deux pays avec la même force ou le même sens, quelques unes étant employées uniquement avec une emphase ou dans un seul sens, tandis que d'autres sont employées de la même manière dans les deux territoires. En même temps, il a été également constaté que les traducteurs ne sont pas toujours au courant de ce fait et ont une tendance à négliger ces expressions.

Par ces motifs, il sera suggéré de traiter ces expressions lorsque des traductions assermentées seront réalisées en Argentine (en langues espagnole et anglaise) afin d'arriver à l'équivalence appropriée et dans le but de respecter la législation et les normes en vigueur.

Vu la portée du présent travail, l'approfondissement de certains aspects de cette optique linguistique devrait se poursuivre. La comparaison et l'analyse de plusieurs expressions en Latin ne constitue pas un fait restrictif car il y a bien d'autres qui ont été laissées de côté. Pour la présente recherche, plus de 70 expressions utilisées habituellement dans la rédaction de matériel juridique et la doctrine y rattachée ont été choisies.

Finalement, la nécessité d'incorporer ce sujet dans les programmes d'études universitaires sera proposée.

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## **PART I: INTRODUCTION**



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## Introduction

Argentina has a highly renowned reputation in training translators. One of the main reasons for this is that Argentina is one of the few countries in the world where translation is studied at the university level. In this country, there are several types of translation studies: scientific and technical; literary; legal; legal, literary, scientific and technical, etc. according to the university.

In general terms, a certified translator has a thorough training in the fields of law, economy and some technical areas as well. Once certified by the Association of Certified Translators of the City of Buenos Aires (*Colegio de Traductores Públicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*) a sworn translator can attest to the veracity of his/her translations. These certified translations are necessary whenever a foreign document has to be filed, registered or recorded with official registries, courts and governmental departments of Argentina. (Section 6, Law 20.305)

In training translators in Argentina, one of the first concepts that students are taught is that translating is not an easy task. Each word in a translation opens new opportunities for exploring new horizons. Each idea offers the chance to conduct new research to improve knowledge and to capitalize new concepts. Words should never be taken in isolation, but as part of a whole idea which may sometimes trigger another meaning of said word. Then, the wonders of this field of knowledge pose unimaginable challenges for all there is to learn, and not knowing how to sort them would involve an obstacle to self development and improvement and, therefore, all the doors which were once learned to open would close for good. Students in translation training courses are taught not only the “what” but also the “how to”, and it could be said that the latter is even more important than the former, since it involves managing the tools translators-to-be will resort to in real-life situations when they obtain their degree.



When dealing with legal material, apart from proper use of language and structure, concepts like translating equivalent expressions, legal devices, false friends, and specific terminology have a prevalent position in translation training courses.

Now, one of the most common problems translators encounter in their professional practice is how to handle foreign words, i.e. words of a third language but with a specific technical meaning in the field of law and of which, generally, s/he has not received formal education during his/her university training. Especially in certified translations, the translator is not allowed to translate any foreign word belonging to a language in which s/he is not certified. Although some may claim that Latin is a dead language, the evidence gathered for this research will show that it is still used (at least in the field at issue here) and that the expressions are considered incorporated into the Spanish or English legal technical corpus. So, Latin words and expressions that commonly appear in legal texts and documents, in both Argentina and the United States of America, will not be considered 'foreign words' for the purposes of this work. The translator's dilemma arises when deciding what to do with these expressions. This difficulty may be due to several factors. In many cases the problem derives from the lack of proper information on how to address the translation of Latin words and expressions in reference to cultural acceptance and adequacy. In other instances, the problem seems to be related to the cultural reluctance to accept the inclusion of Latin expressions in legal documents or the lack of awareness of their use.

The use of these expressions in legal documents in Argentina is widely spread. The Law of Contract, Administrative Law, Civil Law, Corporate Law, Criminal Law, Tax Law, Labor Law, Constitutional Law and Law of Procedure are the most common branches of law where Latin expressions can be found, the latter being the most representative of all.

In the US, the use of Latin in legal material is common too. Some people consider these expressions are not as spread in the US as they are in Argentina, but the truth is that in court documents at least, they are very common. These expressions can be found also in the wording of contracts, corporate material, in Administrative Law, Criminal Law, and Tax



Law and only a specific research may prove whether or not their use is as common as in the corresponding branches of law in Argentina.

Only court material and related books of authority will be analyzed in this research.

In this work, emphasis will be given to the need of specific research to know the meaning of the Latin words and expressions used in the Law of Procedure, as well as their use in Argentina and US, so as to determine whether or not they are equivalent in the two legal systems or if there is an asymmetry and, if so, how to handle said differences to avoid a translation loss and find the most suitable and proximate equivalent.

The original plan was to deal with contract law as well, but as the research advanced, it became clear that including contract law would have resulted in an endless research as said branch of law deserves a severed and in-depth analysis. Thus, this future research is encouraged. Furthermore, this work does not include all Latin expressions used in the Law of Procedure. Therefore, this work only paves the way for future research.

#### Clarifications:

1) After evolving in all the territories it spread, Latin was kept as the language of culture. Today, there are several words, expressions and fixed phrases loaned from Latin. These words are usually grouped under different names: Latinisms, cult words, Latin expressions, Latin words, Latin phrases, etc.<sup>1</sup>

For all the purposes of this work, reference will be made to all of the expressions analyzed as: Latin expressions / Latin words and expressions / Latin expressions and Latinisms. Sometimes, they will be referred to as Latinisms alone. This has nothing to do with the formal classification some linguists do, given that in this research the origin of the words (i.e. Latin) is concerned and this aspect is common to all the groups mentioned above.

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt translated from: "Secretariado de Publicaciones e Intercambio Científico de la Universidad de Murcia, Murcia (Spain). ISSN: 0213-7674: March 1994. Cristina Sánchez Martínez, C/ Miguel Hernández 9, 2º, 3º E, 30011 Murcia (Spain)"



There are two broad kinds of Latin words:

- a) Those that have Latin origin but which have been adapted to the English (*abscond, impugn*) or Spanish (*viceversa, vervigracia, etcetera, etc.*).
- b) Those that are kept in Latin irrespective of their case and declinations (*prima facie, bona fide, etc.*)

In this research, only around 70 expressions corresponding to item b) which are used in the field of Law of Procedure will be addressed.

### **Objectives of this work**

Everyday translators have to face different problems when translating, make several decisions to maximize quality (obtain the maximum equivalent effect possible) and avoid translation loss. The aim of this research is to analyze the actual use of Latin expressions in legal jargon (specifically in court documents and material) both in the Argentine Civil Law system and the Anglo-American legal tradition of the US, so as to give translators and translators-to-be both a thorough understanding of the real use of the expressions concerned and a solid basis to make the most precise translation decision, in consistency with the target culture and from a pragmatic or communicative viewpoint too. The need for awareness to improve quality in translation will be stressed and further research will be encouraged.

Needless to say, the issue under analysis will demand another kind of approach for other countries.

Within the wide range of branches of law, only the Law of Procedure (specifically pleadings, court documents in general and court-related documents) will be addressed. Somewhere along the way, reference will be made to some other areas of law, but no specific research will be conducted on them.

The central idea of this work is, then:

- To highlight the importance of sociological actuality of Latin words, expressions and Latinisms in specialized texts (court documents and related material) as well as of research in order to focus on said scenario when making the translation choice.
- To make a thorough contrastive analysis of Latin words and expressions both in Spanish and English legal texts (in Argentina and US court documents and related material only), providing supporting material or examples for all the cases analyzed.
- To demonstrate to what extent certified translators in Argentina are aware of how to deal with Latin expressions and Latinisms when translating (in the language pair English-Spanish only), and to give some suggestions on how to improve this skill.
- To suggest possible ways to address this issue with respect to translators-to-be and translators as well.
- To open a door to future research on analogous issues.

The hypotheses are:

- Translators do not translate Latin words and expressions because they are not aware of their equivalence, mismatch or actual use of said words and expressions in the target language.
- Translators do not translate Latin words and expressions because they have been taught not to translate foreign words with respect to which they have not had formal education, a degree and a certification.

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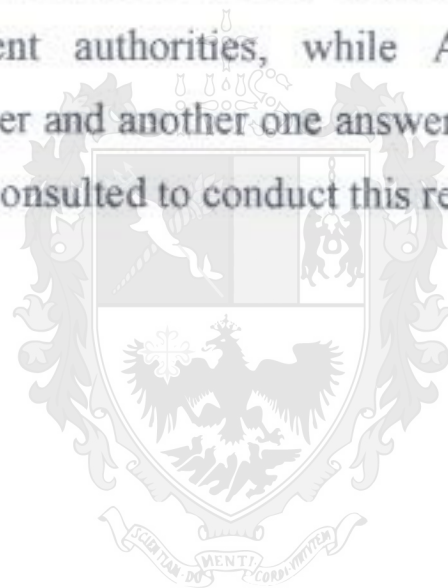
- Translators translate Latin words and expressions, when appropriate, because they are aware that they have been incorporated into the Spanish or English legal corpus and that they are thus part of the technical legal jargon of the two countries.
- Translators do not translate Latin words and expressions because they are thought to be universally understood.

### **Organization of this work**

This work consists of 7 Parts and 7 Chapters. Part I is the Introduction. Part II includes Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the use of Latin in Law, of the impact the Plain English Movement has had on language in general and, particularly, on legal language. There is also a specific detailed section dealing with the history of Latin in England and in English Courts, since it also defined the language of US Courts. There is also a specific brief review of Latin in US and in Argentina at present. The literary review on this subject is included here. As an addition to the theoretical basis of this work, Chapter 2 deals with translation studies in general and of foreign words in particular and how those words have become part of everyday legal language. Part III of this work develops the instruments used as a basis to later conduct the comparative research of Chapter 5. Chapters 3 and 4 describe and analyze the data gathered for this research. Chapter 3 includes a description of the quantitative research conducted with lawyers and translators of Argentina through a self-administered questionnaire and the findings arising from their answers. Chapter 4 presents the qualitative research done in the form of interviews to eminent authorities (a judge, a translator and lawyer, a lawyer with expertise in the international field and a foreign civil-law lawyer). Highlights of each of the interviews are given, and the results and impressions on all the interviews are described. The full versions of the interviews appear as Annex A to this work. Part IV includes the Development of the comparative research (in Chapter 5) made with more than 70 Latin words and expressions used in Argentina and in the US, supported by sample citation and a suggestion on how to deal with each of them. This Chapter 5 is divided into 3 sections. Section 1 makes reference to the methodology and criteria used to conduct the comparative analysis. It describes some



of the findings of Chapters 3 and 4 and how they have been construed to make the comparison. A three-fold classification of Latin expressions is made, according to their peculiarities. Said analysis is developed in Section 2, where the expressions are analyzed according to their frequency in use. Section 3 makes a summary of the analysis, arranged in charts, for a quick reference of the contents of Sections 1 and 2. The charts corresponding to the analysis of section 2 are alphabetically ordered according to the group to which they belong. Part V includes Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. Chapter 6 describes the conclusions based on the objectives and the hypotheses described above as well as on the research question, and Chapter 7 includes the implications of this work and an exhortation to continue the research, as well as the description of the specific contribution of this work to the scientific community. Part VI contains Annexes A and B. Annex A includes the four original interviews conducted to eminent authorities, while Annex B contains a sample questionnaire answered by a lawyer and another one answered by a translator. Finally, Part VII includes all the bibliography consulted to conduct this research.



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## PART II: THEORY



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## CHAPTER 1: Latin in Courts

### Overview of the Use of Latin in Law

The Latin originated in the area of Lazio, Italy, and then it progressively spread to become the official language of all the Roman Empire. It then became the dominant cultural language of Western Europe. This was not due to the fact that it was thought of as a superior language (if contrasted with Greek, Arabic or the local languages), but because of the political, military, and administrative achievements of the Roman Empire.

After the fall of said Empire, Latin became the common language for general understanding in the Middle Ages. It was the basis of many languages and now it is still used in many Spanish-speaking countries (since Roman Law is the basis of civil law, mainly applied in Spanish speaking countries), where it has suffered certain adaptations in most of the cases. It is not used in all the fields of knowledge but for specific technical ones. Legal language is perhaps the best exponent of this fact. Latin expressions are commonly found in all areas of the Law, although they are more frequent in the Law of Procedure and in Contract Law.

As mentioned above, at present the use of Latin has its own features and is not pure. It has suffered changes as regards its morphology to suit a particular need. Originally, Latin had five declinations and seven cases (nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative and locative). In the field of Law, however, there have been adaptations and some expressions are used as nouns irrespective of their original Latin case. Sometimes, however, lack of knowledge of the rules of Latin lead to confusion in the use of Latin words and expressions. This is the case of *bona fides* (good faith) or *bona fide* (in good faith) or of *status quo* (in the state with which/by which), *in statu quo* (in the state in which) and *statu quo* (by which state). The case denoted by the pure Latin expression changes its meaning. However, it is said that, out of context, these expressions have been crystallized thus losing their literal sense (as in the case of *habeas corpus*) and therefore, they are used with only one spelling to mean only one thing. *Statu quo* is used in Spanish in the expression: “mantener el *statu quo*” (to maintain the *statu quo*), although *quo* would have no use here since it does not begin any proposition.





After the Norman Conquest, the written languages of the law were Latin and English (in spite of the fact that Normans spoke French). William the Conqueror, himself, did not speak English, but in his will to govern both Englishmen and Normans, he did not rule out English as a language.

“Out of 487 legal documents which survived till our times dated back to 1066-1100, 19 are in English, 9 are in both English and Latin and the remaining 459 are in Latin only.”<sup>5</sup>

According to Matulewska and Wasielewska<sup>6</sup>, the popularity of Latin was probably due to the fact that the governing class wanted to write the law in a language which would not be understood by common people. Moreover, the judges (who were usually the clergymen) also used Latin. Among the numerous words from Latin that exist in English, the following ones are some of those mentioned by these authors: *corporeal, incorporeal, notary, protonotary, citation, exception, perjury, fieri facias, habeas corpus, mandamus, subpoena, verdict, donor, legacy, homicide, testify, testimony, testator, testament, advocate, proctor, procurator, attorney, solicitor, counsel, counselor*, etc. (some of them were borrowed from Latin directly but others were borrowed from Latin via Old French).

With Woodbine,<sup>7</sup> it is practically impossible to determine when French became the language of English courts. The traditional belief has been that the use of French in England for all purposes was a direct result of the Norman Conquest, that French became the ordinary language of all people except those in the lowest classes. There has apparently not been an attempt to explain why, then, the society adopted English as the national tongue and only the lawyers continued to use French.

As Barker says,<sup>8</sup> there is a Chronicle of Robert Gloucester that says that the Normans only knew how to speak their own language and spoke French, and noblemen kept it. But “low

<sup>5</sup> Matulewska, Aleksandra and Wasielewska, Magdalena. *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Woodbine, George E. *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> Barker, Charles, *op. cit.*



men” kept to English. This bears witness to the prestige of French and that English was no longer the language of upper-class culture and administration. People wrote in the language of their own region. Therefore, Early Middle English texts give the impression of a welter of dialects, without common standards regarding pronunciation, spelling, grammar and phonology.

It is not until the reign of Edward I that there is indisputable evidence of a body of lawyers appearing in courts using French in pleading.

Some argue that French begins to be used in England as a regularly written language some two hundred years after the Norman Conquest, when other French invasion took place after the marriage of Henry III to Eleanor of Provence.

The upper classes of society used French and Latin. English was mainly used in oral communication. Latin was the language of the church, of scholarship, and of international communication.

An official attempt to Anglicize the legal language was made by Edward III in 1362. A statute stated that since French was no longer generally understood, pleadings in the courts should be in English. But this statute was ineffective.

What is clear is that, as a result of the Norman Conquest, new French terms came into use in England and, in writing, their Latin equivalents, which the introduction of political feudalism made inevitable. The few laws made by William I for England were written in Latin.

The issuance of both English and Latin and English documents practically disappeared in the reign of Rufus.

When Henry IV seized the throne in 1399, England, for the first time since the Norman Conquest, had a king whose mother tongue was English.



English became used by all social classes in the second half of the 13th century when it gradually superseded French and Latin. Finally, it was introduced to the school curricula in the 14th century. At this time, French ceased to be the mother-tongue even of the nobility. Literature was written more and more in English being Chaucer its major figure. Gradually, the prestige of the London language grew, and in the sixteenth century there was wide recognition of the language of the court at Westminster as the "best" English.

Although French died out in England, it left its mark on English, especially on the vocabulary where a huge number of French loan-words came into the language during the Middle English period.

In 1730 a statute ordered that the proceedings in courts would have to be in the English language only, and not in Latin or French. Since that time, more English has become used in legal vocabulary.

Once more, the late Middle Ages had seen the establishment of a standard form of written English. But Latin was still a rival since it had great prestige as the language of international learning. In universities, Latin was the medium of instruction. The defeat of Latin was the consequence of religious disputes during the Reformation and of an increase in a national feeling which accompanied the rise of the modern nation-state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Another factor was the rise of social and occupational groups which had little or no Latin (although there were social groups which fought hard to keep Latin, because their professional monopoly depended on the mastery of such language, which was reserved for the learned ones at that time (physicians, medical doctors, etc)). However, those in favor of English finally won this contest.

Of course, in the same way as French left some signs of its existence when it died out in England, Latin did its part. In Renaissance England there was a flood of Latin loans. This was encouraged by the large number of translations made from Latin. When English gained the fields of discourse, many of the translations of Latin works into English were deeply